

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A projector, comprising:

a light beam dividing optical element that divides light from a light source into a plurality of partial light beams;

5 a polarization conversion element that converts the plurality of partial light beams into one type of polarized light beam polarized substantially in same directions;

an electro-optical device that modulates an illumination light beam emitted from the polarization conversion element;

10 a projection lens that projects light modulated by the electro-optical device; and

a polarization selection surface that selects light of a predetermined polarized component included in the illumination light beam, that emits the light toward the electro-optical device, that selects light of a predetermined polarized component in the light modulated by the electro-optical device and that emits the light toward the projection lens,

15 when a plane defined by a normal line of a polarization selection surface and a central axis of the illumination light beam is assumed to be a plane of incidence, a direction parallel to the plane of incidence and perpendicularly intersecting the central axis is defined as the X-axis direction, and a direction perpendicularly intersecting the plane of incidence is defined as the Y-axis direction, a direction of polarization beam separation by the polarization conversion element being the X-axis direction.

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